

City of Corunna
Regular Council Meeting
Monday, October 15, 2001

Present: Bayless, Dumond, Hornus, Mehig, Ockerman, Runyan.

Absent: Billis (excused).

Guests: Joe Sawyer, City Manager; Gregg Brichan; Al Fowler; Janet Washburn, Parks and Recreation Director; Gene Sanderson; Arnie Jessen; Jackie Leone, The Argus Press; John DeGood; Larry LeCureux; Judy Horton; Sam Burwell; Clark Long; Don Runyon; Dawn Johnson; Karen Johnson; Millie Taute; and other concerned citizens.

The meeting was called to order in the City Council Chambers by Mayor Pro-Tem Dumond at 7:00 p.m.

MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS REGULAR MEETING: Hornus moved, Mehig seconded to approve the minutes of the previous regular meeting. Councilperson Bayless advised a correction was needed on page 13 of the minutes under the executive session. The minutes state "Mehig moved, Bayless seconded" but Councilperson Bayless advised he was absent so he could not have seconded the motion. Councilperson Ockerman stated he believed he seconded the motion.

Roll call vote:

Yes: Ockerman, Dumond, Hornus, Runyan, Bayless, Mehig.

No: None.

Motion CARRIED

AGENDA APPROVAL: Hornus moved, Bayless seconded to approve the agenda as presented by removing Item No. 7) Consider Traffic Control Orders to Accommodate Streetscape Design and adding Item No. 7) Consider Purchase of Video Inspection System and Item No. 8) Consider Organizational Meeting.

Roll call vote:

Yes: Bayless, Runyan, Mehig, Ockerman, Dumond, Hornus.

No: None.

Motion CARRIED

APPROVAL OF VENDOR DISBURSEMENTS: Hornus moved, Bayless seconded to approve the vendor disbursements as presented.

Roll call vote:

Yes: Runyan, Ockerman, Bayless, Hornus, Mehig, Dumond.

No: None.

Motion CARRIED

COUNCIL ROUNDTABLE DISCUSSION: Councilperson Ockerman stated he wanted to address the council concerning the two-year Shiawassee Area Transportation Agency

meeting that was held recently. He further stated he wanted to voice his displeasure at this point because he has had nothing but positive things to say about the agency for the first two-years. He also stated he and Councilperson Runyan have been on the board since its inception and things have been going terrifically well. Councilperson Ockerman advised at the meeting he felt the agency was trying to drive people to a conclusion and the conclusion the board was driving to upset him deeply. The meeting started with "if money was no object" and he knew there was trouble coming as soon as he heard that. He further advised the people were asked what they wanted the Shiawassee Area Transportation Agency to become. If there is a farm 20 miles out, the people want the Shiawassee Area Transportation Agency to go to the farm. He also advised the board came back and asked how it would be paid for. Raising fares, millage and money from general funds was mentioned. Councilperson Ockerman stated he was disturbed because as a businessman he knows that you can go too far and too fast, and he felt the board was just about ready to do that. He further stated he was just warning the city council that he does not like where the Shiawassee Area Transportation Agency is going, and it is sad because public transportation is needed. He also stated if the Shiawassee Area Transportation Agency does not stay in the metropolitan area until its head is above water, he was afraid the agency will be asking the public for money, and he does not think the public will stand for it. Councilperson Hornus stated that was one of the questions he asked the night the presentation was made. He further stated he told the board that grants come and go, and it will get down to a point where the taxpayers will be funding the agency. Councilperson Ockerman stated when public transportation was first brought up, there were a lot of people who could not afford a vehicle and some older folks who could not drive. He further stated it costs the agency five or six dollars per person to ride a bus but only three dollars per person is being collected unless the person is handicapped or elderly. He also stated if the agency tries to go 20 miles to a farmhouse out in Durand instead of staying in the City of Durand then anybody with common sense can figure out what will happen in a hurry. Councilperson Ockerman explained the agency is trying to be all things to all people, and he is afraid of what will happen. He further explained the agency is within \$5,000 to break even, and the ridership numbers keep going up, but the board needs to stay on the course and he is afraid the course is being changed. Councilperson Hornus asked if the agency would ever get to the point of breaking even. Councilperson Ockerman advised he knows it would. The program was started with 45 percent funding so the agency had to make up the difference, which has been done and the agency is within 90 percent of paying for the program. He further advised in his opinion the board is so close in destroying the program because the only answer is to get more money and he is not ready to pay for the program. The program is very much needed, and it saddens him to see the board drive to this kind of conclusion. Councilperson Ockerman stated he did not think Councilperson Runyan was as upset as he was, but Councilperson Ockerman felt that he saw this move as the beginning of the end of the Shiawassee Area Transportation Agency. Councilperson Ockerman further stated he did not like to state this publicly but if somebody does not say it then that is what will happen. He also stated there are grants that allow this sort of thing, but at the end of the grant someone will be left holding the bag. Councilperson Runyan stated when this council agreed to get into the contract it was the council's belief that if the transportation program ever went to taxes or money

coming out of the city then the city would withdraw. He further stated he thought some of the other government units stated the same thing. Councilperson Ockerman stated Councilperson Runyan heard him tell the board just that. Councilperson Ockerman further stated what bothered him so much is that the board use to think the citizens would not vote for millage, but they found out that other communities are going to the city councils and getting permission to take money out of the general fund.

Councilperson Bayless advised the special ambulance service meeting was canceled. The county medical authority met with the ambulance board and offered some valuable assistance. He further advised the by-law committee met to consider more options. Instead of having one side versus another the committee agreed that everyone could compromise a little bit in order to come up with a unified agreement that would be good for the Corunna ambulance service and for the citizens. He also advised he felt this was the right decision, and it was bringing everyone back together on the same page. Councilperson Bayless stated he wanted to publicly thank the county medical authority for getting involved and they should be congratulated. It is in the best interest of the ambulance service for everyone to work together. Councilperson Mehig concurred with Councilperson Bayless. Everyone is working towards the same goal, which is a united front.

CALL TO AUDIENCE: Al Fowler stated his wife had a witch on the telephone pole in front of his house, and the police came and told her to take it down because the witch should not be on the telephone pole or in the right-of-way. He further stated there are all kinds of signs on poles between Corunna and Owosso and asked why the police are hassling him. Councilperson Ockerman stated good point. Councilperson Dumond stated signs on utility poles are illegal. Mr. Fowler stated the police came to his house, knocked on the door and told his wife to take the witch down. He further stated he hopes all of the other signs disappear that are in the road right-of-way. Mr. Fowler advised council knows that he is very unhappy with the ambulance being used to go to the grocery store or restaurant, but now, the little emergency vehicle is being used to take kids to school almost everyday. This is a waste of the taxpayer's dollars and if the vehicle is being used to take kids to school then the ambulance service must be babysitting kids there. Mr. Fowler asked if the ambulance service had insurance for this use.

Dawn Johnson stated the ambulance service had a meeting last Tuesday with the township supervisor, Mr. Wazny, and it was a very good meeting. It was stated at the meeting that everyone is on the same line of thinking, but there is a long way to get to it. She further stated everything is looking good, but she wanted to let the council and the audience know that it is not the volunteers who are at fault here and that is what the volunteers are being made to feel. She also stated she believed the past ambulance board representatives are to blame for the current situation. The morale of the volunteers is so down that every other slam and everything published in the paper is not good. Ms. Johnson advised for the past two weeks she and Karen Johnson have found information that has been buried or put away, and she hopes the information satisfies every one who has requested information. Ms. Johnson further advised she works each day from noon to 6:00 p.m., and she has had to pick up her daughter from school in the ambulance

because her daughter has been sick. She also advised her husband works out of town a lot and this is the only thing she can do. She also advised once she picks her daughter up from school, she takes her to the babysitter, which only takes three minutes. Ms. Johnson stated she cannot leave her sick child at school and there is nobody that can come in and cover her for that three minutes so she is probably guilty on that issue. She further stated the service is not abused and there are a lot of people who work at the ambulance service 24 hours per day and weekends so there are times a person has to run to the store. There are men and women working at the ambulance who might need personal items. She also stated the ambulance service has made great strides lately by agreeing with each other. There are a bunch of men and women who are dedicated to this city so please do not forget that and a thank you would be nice once in a while instead of constant criticism. Councilperson Mehig stated he could not agree with Ms. Johnson more. The volunteers walked into a big mess, and the cooperation between everybody has turned around 180 degrees. He further stated he thought there would be better morale now that everybody is working together.

CITY MANAGER'S REPORT: Mr. Sawyer reviewed his manager's report with council and with those in the audience. He explained the microphone system that he obtained on a trial basis. He further explained the microphone system could be utilized for more than just council meetings. He also explained the cost to get enough wireless microphones to outfit the council chamber would get big very fast. Mr. Sawyer advised two wireless microphones would cost \$2,300 and six wireless microphones would cost \$4,500, which is too exorbitant for what the city needs. Councilperson Ockerman asked if the distortion was common. Mr. Burwell advised he has worked on systems like this before, and there are isolation stands available. If the microphones are properly placed in the isolation stands, the microphones would only pick up what is in the surrounding area and nothing from the tables and floor. He further advised he did not think the isolation stands would cost a lot of money. Mr. Sawyer explained it would cost \$3,100 to purchase everything the council chambers would need. He further explained it would benefit the city to try to get a system that does more than just the council room. Mr. Sawyer showed the Christmas banners that the Downtown Development Authority purchased, which will be hung up sometime after the Veteran's Day holiday.

CONSIDER PURCHASE OF VEHICLE LIFT: Ockerman moved, Hornus seconded to approve the purchase of a vehicle lift with accessories and installation from CarQuest for the amount of \$6,500 to be paid for from line item 661-902-977.000.

Roll call vote:

Yes: Hornus, Mehig, Dumond, Bayless, Ockerman, Runyan.

No: None.

Motion CARRIED

CONSIDER AUDITOR CONTRACTS: Ockerman moved, Hornus seconded to approve the auditing contracts for the City of Corunna, Corunna Softball Commission, Corunna Historical Commission, Corunna Downtown Development Authority, and Corunna

Fourth of July Commission with Abraham & Gaffney, P.C. for fiscal years ending 2002 through 2006.

Roll call vote:

Yes: Mehigh, Bayless, Runyan, Dumond, Hornus, Ockerman.

No: None.

Motion CARRIED

CONSIDER APPROVAL OF DATA DROPS: Ockerman moved, Hornus seconded to approve the data drop and raceway work with Genesee Technologies, Inc. in the amount of \$820.70 to be paid from line item 101-265-818.000.

Roll call vote:

Yes: Dumond, Hornus, Ockerman, Mehigh, Runyan, Bayless.

No: None.

Motion CARRIED

CONSIDER APPROVAL OF MDT & AVL GRANT LOCAL MATCH: Bayless moved, Hornus seconded to approve the payment of the local match for the MDT & AVL grant in the amount of \$1,146.32 to be paid for from line item 101-301-977.000.

Roll call vote:

Yes: Ockerman, Dumond, Hornus, Runyan, Bayless, Mehigh.

No: None.

Motion CARRIED

CONSIDER REVIEW OF ORDINANCES: Mehigh moved, Runyan seconded to instruct the city manager to establish a schedule for review of all City of Corunna ordinances, bringing recommendations and revisions back to council.

Roll call vote:

Yes: Bayless, Runyan, Mehigh, Ockerman, Dumond, Hornus.

No: None.

Motion CARRIED

CONSIDER PURCHASE OF VIDEO INSPECTION SYSTEM: Ockerman moved, Hornus seconded to approve the purchase of a video inspection system from MyTana Mfg. Co., Inc. for the amount of \$8,995 to be paid for from line item 590-548-977.000.

Roll call vote:

Yes: Runyan, Ockerman, Bayless, Hornus, Mehigh, Dumond.

No: None.

Motion CARRIED

CONSIDER ORGANIZATIONAL MEETING: Ockerman moved, Mehigh seconded to call a council organizational meeting at 7:00 p.m. on November 13, 2001.

Roll call vote:

Yes: Hornus, Mehigh, Dumond, Bayless, Ockerman, Runyan.

No: None.

Motion CARRIED

CALL TO AUDIENCE: Gene Sanderson stated he had someone approach him about the upcoming election. The person claims she was told at the last election if she did not put at least one mark in each square the ballot would be thrown out. Mr. Sanderson asked if this was true. Ms. Long and Mr. Sawyer advised no. Mr. Sanderson stated he did not think that was true, but that is what the person told him. Councilperson Ockerman stated the people need to be made aware that they can vote for councilpersons in different wards. He further stated he has not received the newsletter yet, but some people have, and it still is not real clear. He does not think people know they can vote for councilpersons in each ward to let the people know on Election Day. He also stated he wished the article could have been done better in the quarterly newsletter that was sent out. The newsletter was never brought back to council to review so council could not do that. Councilperson Mehig asked if anything could be posted. Mr. Sawyer advised it is very common that an explanation be part of the ballot instructions when people are handed a ballot. Ms. Long advised her election workers explain the instructions pretty well. Councilperson Ockerman stated if the election workers do explain then the people do not get it because the people just do not know. Mr. Sawyer advised this was something that could be emphasized on Election Day as ballots are handed out.

Judy Horton reminded council that the Halloween pancake breakfast would be held on Saturday. She encouraged council and the audience to attend.

Al Fowler stated he did not want the city council to be misled. Ms. Johnson stated she picked up her child one day, but he has seen the emergency vehicle drop off kids at least three or four days a week and that is the way it is. He further stated if we have to support the ambulance service with tax dollars then it is not right.

Sam Burwell stated he has listened to quite a bit about the ambulance board and the volunteers that really do give a lot of themselves to be down there. He further stated he knows the volunteers are getting rich down there with the kind of money they make, and they would probably do better at McDonalds or delivering pizza for Dominos. He also stated everyone has to keep in mind that the community has never had any type of tragedy here that other parts of the country have experienced. He does not know these people, but just because of the nature of what they do, he believes in his heart that these people would give of themselves the same way the people in New York did. Mr. Burwell advised everyone should keep in mind that the volunteers answer calls all time of the day and night, and they do not know what kind of situation they are going to. He further advised the volunteers should be thanked for what they do. Councilperson Dumond stated the volunteers are on duty, and they have to be ready to go at all times. Mr. Fowler stated the ambulance service is babysitting in the morning, and the volunteers are taking their kids to school in an emergency vehicle. He further stated the emergency vehicle is being used as a taxicab, and there is a hell of a lot of difference. If his tax dollars are going towards this, then he wants the city council to face up to it and tell them to stop it. He also stated he thought it was against the law.

Joe Sawyer asked the audience if they noticed a difference with the microphone system volume and the ability to hear people. Ms. Horton advised yes. Mr. Burwell advised he could hear Councilperson Runyan better. John DeGood stated he did not know why a room this size needed a microphone system. Councilperson Dumond asked if there was something that the microphones could sit in. Mr. Burwell advised something could be fabricated to simulate floor microphones. He further advised floor stands would be less money than isolation stands, which would accomplish the same thing.

ADJOURN: Hornus moved to adjourn.

Roll call vote:

Yes: Mehig, Bayless, Runyan, Dumond, Hornus, Ockerman.

No: None.

Motion CARRIED Time was 8:19 p.m.

DAVID DUMOND, MAYOR PRO-TEM

YVONNE F. LONG, CITY CLERK